

REMARKS

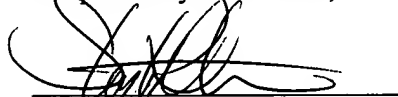
Claims 1-6, 12-24, and 30 are pending in the present application. Claims 11, 25-29, and 31 are cancelled to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal. Since the amendments do not raise new issues that would require further search or consideration, Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments be entered upon filing an appeal. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the prior art of record and is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: January 15, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen R. Tkacs
Reg. No. 46,430
Carstens, Yee & Cahoon, LLP
P.O. Box 802334
Dallas, TX 75380
(972) 367-2001
Agent for Applicants